

Message Text

SECRET

PAGE 01 STATE 210908

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DRAFTED BY P:JJSISCO:MTB
APPROVED BY THE SECRETARY
S/S :CABORG

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FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS IMMEDIATE
INFO AMEMBASSY AMMAN PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY BEIRUT PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY CAIRO PRIORITY
AMEMBASSY TEL AVIV PRIORITY

S E C R E T STATE 210908

NODIS
CHEROKEE

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SY, US

SUBJECT: SYRIA PROTESTS NEWSWEEK STATEMENT.

REF: DAMASCUS 3454

FOR AMBASSADOR FROM SECRETARY

1. PLEASE CONVEY FOLLOWING ORAL MESSAGE FROM THE SECRETARY
TO PRESIDENT ASAD.

2. FOREIGN MINISTER KHADDAM HAS CALLED TO OUR ATTENTION A
NEWSWEEK ARTICLE ON SEPTEMBER 8 ATTRIBUTING TO SECRETARY
KISSINGER A STATEMENT TO THE EFFECT THAT HE QTE TOLD
JERUSALEM NEGOTIATING TEAM THAT SYRIAN PRESIDENT HAFEZ
ASAD HAD DECLARED HE WOULD BE WILLING TO MEET RABIN FACE-
TO-FACE FOR TALKS ON A FINAL PEACE SETTLEMENT IF ISRAEL

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AGREED TO RETURN THE GOLAN HEIGHTS TO SYRIA. UNQTE.

SECRETARY WISHES PRESIDENT TO KNOW THAT AT NO TIME HAS ANY SUCH STATEMENT BEEN MADE BY HIM TO NEWSWEEK OR ANY OTHER MEDIA. SECRETARY KISSINGER KNOWS THAT NO SUCH STATEMENT HAS EVER BEEN MADE BY PRESIDENT ASAD TO THE SECRETARY. SECRETARY WISHES PRESIDENT TO KNOW WE WILL TAKE IMMEDIATE STEPS TO HAVE STATE DEPARTMENT SPOKESMAN ISSUE

CATEGORICAL DENIAL AT FRIDAY'S PRESS BRIEFING. THE SECRETARY IS CONFIDENT THAT PRESIDENT ASAD WILL RECOGNIZE ABOVE STATEMENT FOR WHAT IT IS--TOTALLY FALSE PROPAGANDA INTENDED TO SOW SEEDS OF DISCORD BETWEEN SYRIA AND THE U.S.

3. SECRETARY WISHES PRESIDENT ASAD ALSO TO KNOW THAT HE WELCOMED THE OPPORTUNITY TO MEET WITH HIM ON TWO OCCASIONS DURING HIS CURRENT MIDDLE EASTERN TRIP. WE DO NOT AND HAVE NEVER CONCEIVED OF THE INTERIM AGREEMENT BETWEEN EGYPT AND ISRAEL AS AN END IN ITSELF. IN THE COURSE OF OUR DISCUSSIONS WITH OUR EGYPTIAN FRIENDS, WE MADE CLEAR TO THEM, AS THE SECRETARY DID TO PRESIDENT ASAD THAT WE ARE PREPARED TO MAKE A SERIOUS EFFORT TO HELP BRING ABOUT FURTHER NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN SYRIA AND ISRAEL, IN THE FIRST INSTANCE THROUGH DIPLOMATIC CHANNELS. SECRETARY WISHES TO REAFFIRM THAT THIS CONTINUES TO BE OUR POSITION, AND WE REMAIN READY TO ASSIST THE PARTIES IF THIS IS THEIR DESIRE. KISSINGER

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